

[PIÈCE JOINTE/ENCLOSURE] *

*Note**Memorandum*

CONFIDENTIAL

[New York], November 17, 1962

POLISH DEPUTY MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS ON CUBA

I had an interesting talk on Cuba last night with Deputy Minister Winiewicz, Vice-Chairman of the Polish Delegation, at a private reception. A journalist in Poznan before the war, Mr. Winiewicz was Ambassador in Washington from 1947 to 1955 at which time he took up his present position in Warsaw. There was only one other person who shared in the conversation last night, our host, Mr. Price Erichsen-Brown, our Consul in New York. Mr. Winiewicz whom Mr. Erichsen-Brown and myself knew while we were in Warsaw felt, I think, that he could talk fairly freely.

2. I asked him what he thought could be done at the present time in relation to the Cuban problem and particularly whether he felt that a three-nation setup along the line of the International Commission in Indochina could not be envisaged as a mediation team and perhaps inspection unit in Cuba. Mr. Winiewicz did not seem attracted by the idea. He said that at the present time he was convinced from his talks with the Cubans here in New York that they were craving for the initiation of conversations with the Americans. He claimed that the Cubans were almost desperate for some form of direct dialogue with Washington. He said that as far as the Poles were concerned, they were encouraging this trend and were desirous of being helpful in the context of their relations with the United States, the pattern of which they were very anxious to preserve. He said that when Foreign Minister Rapacki had been invited to pay a visit to Cuba last summer, he was rather concerned about the reaction that such a visit might cause in the United States. The Poles did not want their relations with the Americans to suffer from what might appear as an effort to get closer ties with Cuba. Mr. Rapacki decided to accept the invitation all the same. From Mr. Winiewicz' comment the implication was that there were some pressing problems in Cuba concerning relations between Polish experts and technicians there and the Cubans. Mr. Rapacki spent seven days in Cuba in July. Mr. Winiewicz claims that Mr. Rapacki's stay had a restraining effect and that the Cuban propaganda campaign against the United States slowed down afterwards.

3. I asked Mr. Winiewicz if Poland had many experts and technicians in Cuba. He said that they had had more than they have now. There had been conflicts between some of the Polish technicians and the Cubans, particularly in the field of fisheries. He said that because some Polish advisers wore holy medals and attended Mass they were considered by the Cubans as counter-revolutionaries. The situation apparently came to a head and the Polish advisers were withdrawn at least as far as fishing operations were concerned. Mr. Winiewicz said that now they had only mining technicians in Cuba.

4. On the question of the Cuban fishing port which is being built by the Soviets now, he said that the construction of the port had been open to any nation on the basis of bids. In fact the Japanese bid had been accepted by the Cuban Government. However, under pressure from Washington the Japanese had later withdrawn their offer. Castro then turned to socialist countries and sounded out Poland. Poland could not afford to finance the undertaking as it was already involved in the building of a harbour in Cyprus. Eventually the Soviet Union had decided to take over the project.

5. I said I imagined it must not be too easy to act as adviser to the Cubans as they appear to be a somewhat undisciplined lot. Mr. Winiewicz said that it was not so much that as a case of a